

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Plaintiff

vs.

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Defendant

PARENTING GUIDELINES  
of the  
18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District

With respect to the exercise of custody of each minor child of the parties, and for so long as there is a minor child of the parties residing with one of them, both parties shall promote the best interest of their child by complying with the following:

- (1) The parties shall respect the need for the child for close, frequent and continuing contact with both parents and the need for each parent to have input into the decisions affecting the rearing of the child.
- (2) The parties shall communicate and cooperate effectively and consistently with each other toward the best interest of their child. They shall encourage the free flow of information about the child between the parties.
- (3) Each party shall at all times keep the other apprised of their residence address and telephone number and shall promptly notify the other of any changes.
- (4) When the child is in the custody of one of the parties, that parent shall have the right to make and the responsibility for making the minor day-to-day and routine decisions in connection with the child.
- (5) The parties shall keep the child in a clean, wholesome environment at all times. The child shall not be exposed to the use of controlled substances, excessive use of alcohol or any condition hazardous to the welfare of the child.
- (6) Each party shall have direct access to the child's doctors, dentist or other physical or mental health care provider the same as if the parent were the sole custodian of the child. Neither party shall attempt to inhibit the free flow of information from any of the child's health care providers to the other party. Each party shall immediately notify the other party of any information obtained regarding the health and general welfare of the child.
- (7) Each party shall have direct access to the child's teachers, counselors, school and religious advisors the same as if the parent were the sole custodian of the child. Neither party shall attempt to inhibit the free flow of information from any of the child's teachers or advisors to the other parent. Each party shall immediately notify the other party of any information obtained regarding the education and general

welfare of the child. This includes advising each other of grades, progress in school, lessons or tutoring, and activities relating thereto.

- (8) Medical care providers, educational personnel and any other person deemed by law to have a confidential relationship to the minor child as patient or pupil are hereby authorized to discuss with both Plaintiff and Defendant all matters regarding the child's health, education, religious rearing and general welfare as if he or she was the full legal custodian of the child.
- (9) Each party shall promptly inform the other of any serious injury or illness sustained by the child requiring medical treatment. Each party shall inform the other of any medical or health problem that arose while the child was in their respective custody. Both parties will provide the other with any medications that the child is taking at the time of transfer of the child. Both parties will provide the other with sufficient information to allow the other to obtain medicine refills if necessary. Both parties will provide the other with names, addresses, phone numbers and other necessary information concerning the child's health care providers.
- (10) The cooperation and involvement of both parties in the child's life is in the best interest of the child. The parties shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner which promotes the cooperation and involvement of the other on any matter which concerns the mental, physical, emotional and moral well-being of the child.
- (11) The parties shall adhere to the following ground rules with respect to the parenting of their child:
  - (a) Neither parent will discuss, nor allow anyone else to discuss, the conduct of the other parent in the presence of the child.
  - (b) Neither parent will say or do anything in the presence of the child that would interfere with or otherwise diminish the natural love, affection, or respect that the child has for the other parent.
  - (c) Neither issues relating to visitation or to child support shall be discussed in the presence of the child.
  - (d) A party's time with the child shall not be withheld because of nonpayment of child support and child support will not be withheld because of visitation problems.
  - (e) Neither party shall threaten to withhold from the other the scheduled time with the child nor threaten to extend their time or refuse to return the child at the end of their scheduled time.
  - (f) Each parent will prepare the child physically and mentally for the time the child is to spend with the other party. The child shall be ready at the appointed time for transfer, together with all of his clothing, personal items and necessities.
  - (g) Neither party shall unreasonably question the child regarding the activities of the other parent.
  - (h) Neither party shall use the child as a conduit of information or requests from one parent to the other, either in person or by other means of communication. Nor shall they use the child to exert pressure on the other parent to comply with any previously conveyed request.

- (i) Either party may temporarily take the child out of the state for a weekend trip, or for longer vacation periods allowed by this visitation schedule with reasonable, prior and written notice to the other parent.
  - (j) Each party shall allow the child reasonable telephone access to the other party. The expense of the child contacting the other parent shall be borne by the party having custody of the child at that time, unless otherwise agreed. The expense of the parent contacting the child shall be borne by the parent initiating the contact. Neither party shall call the other "collect" unless by agreement or in a genuine emergency.
- (12) Each party shall make known to any subsequent spouse, the child's grandparents, aunts, uncles, and adult cousins the conditions of this Order and will encourage them to act in accordance with the expectations set forth herein.